

# Inspection of a good school: Silverdale School

Langdale Gardens, Howdon, Wallsend, Tyne and Wear NE28 0HG

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Inspection dates:

23 and 24 May 2023

## Outcome

Silverdale School continues to be a good school.

## What is it like to attend this school?

Silverdale School makes a big difference in pupils' lives. Pupils enjoy school and do well. They receive personalised pastoral and academic support. This helps them to access a curriculum that is designed and adapted to meet their needs. Leaders are ambitious for the pupils in their care.

On the whole, pupils are kind, considerate and friendly towards each other. They recognise that bullying happens but are confident that staff will step in and help out immediately if a problem occurs.

Most pupils have experienced challenging times in the past. At Silverdale, they feel valued and listened to. This makes pupils feel wanted and part of the Silverdale family. Pupils trust adults and know they are always available to talk to if they have a worry or a concern.

Pupils do struggle with their emotions and behaviours. However, staff provide ongoing emotional support and guidance. The two therapy dogs, Goose and Mabel, are loved by pupils and help pupils regulate their emotions. The school environment is generally calm and relaxed.

Pupils benefit from the opportunities they receive at school. They make the most of the design and technology room, sensory rooms, recreation room with arcade games, plus the outdoor area. It was a pleasure to hear the well-resourced music room alive with the sounds of Nirvana from three talented musicians from key stage 4.

## What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Leaders put the pupils at the centre of everything they do. This starts with the recruitment and retention of highly skilled staff who are dedicated and committed to doing the very best for all pupils. Leaders, staff and governors share the same aspirations and vision for pupils. They recognise the significant challenges many pupils face and do

all they can to make school a purposeful, enjoyable experience.

Leaders have designed effective ways of collating academic, emotional and pastoral information about pupils. Teachers, support staff, link workers and specialist health staff share what they know about each pupil. Leaders then use this information to identify what curriculum, pastoral or career next steps are most appropriate.

Staff check what knowledge pupils have when they start school. Pupils are then placed into a class that matches their needs. The curriculum is organised with small steps of learning and key knowledge. This helps pupils remember and apply the most important parts of the curriculum.

Leaders are determined that pupils acquire strong basic skills and knowledge. Many pupils are not enthusiastic readers, but staff strive to promote the importance of reading. Pupils who are just learning to read receive daily phonics sessions and are given many opportunities to read throughout the day. Leaders skilfully support older pupils who struggle with reading. They use texts that match pupils' reading knowledge but with age-appropriate content. As a result, most pupils read accurately and enjoy the selection of books available in school. Leaders identified that COVID-19 had a significant impact on pupils' writing. Although work has taken place to help pupils catch up, further work is required to develop independent writing opportunities at key stages 3 and 4.

Staff manage challenging behaviours successfully. When pupils are at crisis point, the Hub and link workers provide bespoke emotional support. Where pupils are struggling with issues such as self-injury, smoking or relationships, they receive high-quality pastoral support. Staff explicitly teach pupils how to self-manage their emotions and behaviours. Leaders have robust monitoring systems to track and analyse pupils' behaviour.

Leaders work extensively with parents, carers, the local authority and external agencies to maintain high levels of attendance. However, the number of pupils who are persistently absent from school is too high.

Leaders provide many opportunities for pupils to engage in activities, including climbing, biking and fishing. They also enjoy taking part in enterprise activities such as cooking. These opportunities build pupils' self-esteem, resilience and confidence. There is a detailed programme in place to teach pupils about further education and careers. This runs from early years to key stage 4. The curriculum is well organised and develops pupils' knowledge, skills and awareness of potential career choices and raises aspirations.

Staff enjoy working at the school and feel well supported by leaders. The Friday 'debrief' meeting is appreciated by staff, as they can share concerns and celebrate successes. Governors and leaders are considerate of staff's workload and well-being.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that safeguarding is a priority. All members of staff know they are

responsible for the safety and well-being of pupils. Staff meet daily to share any safeguarding concerns. The safeguarding team and link workers then pass on information to the appropriate external agency or provide support in school. The school's recording system for tracking incidents is detailed and analysed by senior leaders. At times, the use of physical restraint is required. This is used appropriately. Staff are fully trained, and all incidents are recorded effectively, with information shared with parents and carers.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- The number of pupils who are persistently absent from school is too high. This means that many pupils are missing a significant amount of their education. Leaders should continue to develop their approach to support improved levels of attendance.
- The opportunities for writing at key stages 3 and 4 are limited. As a result, pupils are not developing sufficient independent writing skills and knowledge. Leaders should review their approach to how writing is taught.

## **Background**

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in November 2017.

## **How can I feed back my views?**

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

## **Further information**

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil

premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	133432
<b>Local authority</b>	North Tyneside
<b>Inspection number</b>	10255900
<b>Type of school</b>	Special
<b>School category</b>	Foundation special
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	116
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Andrew Graydon
<b>Headteacher</b>	Peter Gannon
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.silverdaleschool.com">www.silverdaleschool.com</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	7 and 8 November 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school operates across three sites. The main site is located in Howdon and includes provision for primary- and secondary-age pupils. A separate specially resourced provision is located at Grasmere Primary in Killingworth. This provision caters for up to 36 primary-age pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs. In addition, the school has a learning centre for up to eight secondary-age pupils who find it difficult to access the main site.
- The school uses two alternative provisions.
- The school caters for pupils with autism spectrum disorder, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, pathological demand avoidance and a range of mental health challenges.
- The school is part of the North Tyneside Learning Trust.
- Nearly all pupils have an education, health and care plan.
- Over 85% of pupils receive pupil premium funding.
- The school does not currently have any early years children.

## Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors did deep dives in the following subjects: English, mathematics and personal, social and health education. Inspectors spoke to leaders about the curriculum and met with teachers from the lessons visited. Inspectors looked at pupils' work and spoke to pupils about the curriculum, behaviour and what it is like to attend this school.
- Inspectors looked at curriculum documents from a range of subjects.
- Inspectors listened to a range of pupils from different year groups read.
- Inspectors met with members of the local governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors looked at the single central record and spoke to leaders, teachers, governors and pupils about safeguarding.
- Inspectors observed pupils at breaktime and lunchtime.
- Inspectors considered the responses made by parents to the Ofsted Parent View survey, free-text responses, and Ofsted's staff and pupil surveys.
- Inspectors visited all three sites.

## Inspection team

David Milligan, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Stephanie Innes-Taylor

His Majesty's Inspector

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